

Introduction

Asthma is a condition which impacts the daily lives of 30 million Europeans and 300 million people globally, with a global prevalence expected to increase to 400 million people worldwide by 2025. To date there is no cure, treatment options are limited and many people have little control over their condition, living at risk of potentially life-threatening asthma attacks. Moreover, direct and indirect costs of asthma to societies are substantial and the total burden in the EU is estimated in € 72 billion.

Asthma outcomes vary by country in Europe but it is clear that investing in asthma research and in comprehensive healthcare system change can bring about significant benefits, such as improving early diagnosis and long-term disease control.

London-Malaga Declaration on Asthma Research Investment

EFA members welcome the vision of the European Asthma Research and Innovation Partnership (EARIP)¹ for developing a coordinated agenda for asthma research and innovation that will position Europe as a front runner addressing this major health and societal challenge and which puts patients and the public at the core of attention to ensure that policy makers, health care professionals and industry players hear their perspective.

As signatories, we commit ourselves fully to promoting higher investment in asthma research in Europe, and we recognize the following key areas as having highest priority:

Diagnostic

- Triggers and risk factors for asthma and exacerbations, in particular in severe asthma
- Asthma management and adherence to treatment

We welcome the development and implementation of regional and national asthma programmes and guidelines in some European Countries which have resulted in improved asthma control and contributed to:

- Improving patient quality of life
- Reducing hospitalisation
- Reducing asthma mortality
- Reducing sick leave and disability pensions

We welcome the international recognition of the need for:

- cost-effective and affordable essential medicines and technologies

- strengthened health systems to provide patient-centred care across all levels of the health system

as highlighted in the WHO 2014 Global Status Report on noncommunicable diseases.

¹ EARIP is a EU-funded project aimed to reduce asthma deaths in Europe by 25% within ten years and by 50% within 20 years. The partnership, made up of 12 European-based organisations, also aims to halve hospital admission rates, speed up the discovery of new treatments and improve self-management

Given these premises, we:

- Call upon the European Commission to:
 - Establish a strategic research framework for asthma, so that public and private resources can be focused on research priority areas
 - Invest in asthma research through specific call proposals in the framework of the Horizon 2020 programme to address the key areas identified
 - Invest in the development of new medicines and treatments through specific call for proposals in the framework of the Innovative Medicines Initiative
 - Promote and facilitate the transfer and adaptation of European best practices in developing national/regional asthma programmes in Europe
- Call upon Members of the European Parliament to:
 - Encourage the European Commission to support asthma research
 - Support the campaign of EFA and its members to increase investments in asthma in Europe
 - Join the European Parliament Interest Group on Allergy and Asthma
- Call upon national governments to:
 - Facilitate EFA members action and advocate towards the European Commission to support asthma research
 - Motivate national funding bodies to increase the national investments in asthma
 - Develop national and regional asthma programmes or guidelines
 - Involve asthma patients in discussions and consultations related to the development of the national strategies

Signatories and their logos

